

# THE WEEKLY PORTAGE SENTINEL.

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## Poetry.

### Canzonet.

Written for the Sentinel.

By ANNIE W. BARTON.

When friendship's bond is broken,

And love's sweet voice is hushed,

What joy can earth afford,

When the heart is thus subdued?

Alas! but one light is left,

The rest have all been lost.

One better hope yet left,

For fate strong hand to sever.

Among the wreck and ruins drear,

Of hopes that once were bright,

Life lingers on from year to year,

Forgetting all that's past.

Oh! what can soothe the restless heart,

Or stop the mind's decay?

When grief has made the sunny heart,

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man, closely enveloped in a black cloak, entered the chamber. Cautiously he advanced to the bed-side and bent over the slumberer.

"It is true, old man, my blow was sure," muttered the sleeper in disjointed phrases, "when I have done everything to shield you from suspicion—and you owe me your present safety!"

"Do accuse you. Why did you deny our interview on the night of the murder? You are not only an assassin, but a base and dastardly one—a double murderer; you have accused an innocent man. Where is the body? Tell me, ere I strangle you," and the exasperated young man seized the goldsmith by the throat, with a fury which threatened the literal execution of the threat.

"Unhand me, scoundrel, unhand me," said and then turning on the bed he groaned heavily. For a time he lay in silence, as though his dream was ended.

The stranger listened awhile, and then snuffed the candle which was flickering as it went out. Again he approached the bed-side, and again the slumberer turned into an uneasy posture.

"Away, old man, away! What if I did kill thee?" groaned he. "Off, off, unhand me!" and Waldeck started with convulsive energy from the bed, and awoke.

He saw the form of the man, and it seemed the waking continuation of his dream.

"Off, off, man," screamed he, springing from the bed upon the form before him.

"Waldeck," said the stranger, as he flung his assailant from him—"Waldeck, are you mad! Rouse yourself."

"Ah!" said the goldsmith, "Robert, is it possible you have dared to come here!"

"I have dared; I come in the dead watches of the night for justice—for justice to your hands; deny me your peril," said Robert Dewrie, for it was he who had thus intruded into the chamber of the other.

"Why, Robert, I do not understand you."

"Understand me, villain! not a word of equivocation with me. Answer me this question. Where is the body of my uncle?"

"Robert Dewrie, you are mad; these sad events have taken away your senses."

"Your subtleties shall not avail you. Here I am, hunted down as a murderer, as a fiend; stigmatized wherever I go, and compelled to burrow in the woods, like a wild beast—and this for your crime."

"Do you mean to accuse me of the crime, Robert?" said Waldeck, with the manner of an injured man. "Would you accuse me?"

Waldeck, choking under the pressure of the other's hand, as he drew from his pocket a short dagger. "Unhand me, Robert, or your blood be upon your own head."

A fierce struggle now ensued, in which Robert, kept at bay by the dagger, was forced to relinquish his hold, after having received several slight wounds.

"Now, young man, if you have night with me, say it quick, and leave the house, or I will consign you to the charge of the sentry," said Waldeck, when he had freed himself from the clutch of his desperate opponent.

"I came, Mr. Waldeck, for justice. I came to appeal to your sense of honor. As I entered this room, I discovered that your slumbers were uneasy and disturbed. I listened, and you confessed in your sleep the murder of your partner. My suspicions were confirmed, and I was overwhelmed with indignation at the baseness which could thus fasten the guilt of his own crime upon another. Mr. Waldeck, you are a murderer."

"I am ready to answer before a court of justice," replied Waldeck, trembling at the disreputable intelligence. "But the words of a sleeper are not generally esteemed competent testimony."

"Before Heaven I will prove your crime."

"Why not before a more immediate tribunal?" said Waldeck with a labored sneer.

"It would not avail me after you have arranged every circumstance to my disadvantage. I leave you, Mr. Waldeck, in your guilt, but we shall meet again—as Heaven is just, we shall meet again, where each shall appear as he is!" said Robert, with an energy and an eloquence which thrilled the blood of his listener, as he turned to depart.

"Stay, Robert, I have never borne you any ill-will; I have done all I could to relieve you from this foul charge. Let us be friends," added Waldeck, in a conciliatory tone.

"We can never be friends," answered Robert, sternly.

"But your patrimony is in the estate of your uncle; can I not make you some advances?"

"No! my patrimony shall be claimed in due time," and Robert Dewrie left the room.

On the stairs he paused to ascertain if he was followed. On satisfying himself that he was not, he descended to the back parlor, where he seated himself. Reflecting upon the gloomy prospects which surrounded him, he spent a half-hour. Having thus assured himself that all was quiet in the house, he found the under-box and lighted a candle. Proceeding through the shop, he raised the trap-door and descended to the cellar.

The object of his visit to the house of his late uncle was to obtain, if possible, any clue which might lead to the discovery of the murderer. Every body else had supposed him the assassin, and had taken no pains to look further into the matter. The unaccountable denial of Waldeck, in relation to the interview on the night of the murder had awakened his suspicions—had revealed to him the plan of the murderer. Armed with these suspicions, he had entered the house on the present occasion to explore the premises and have an interview with Waldeck.

With the most minute attention he examined every part of the cellar. He saw the

black stains of blood, but nothing else appeared to throw light upon the foul transaction. Who the murderer was, he alone knew, but there was not a particle of evidence to criminate him. On the contrary, every circumstance from the quarrel to the pursuit tended to criminate him.

The present visit had confirmed his suspicion of Waldeck; but as he had obtained nothing by which he could make it appear to others, he left the house disappointed and in deep mental agony.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE NECHROMANCER.

The large number of British officers quartered in Boston, at the time of our story, rendered the town one continued scene of gaiety and excitement. Theatrical representations were given by them in Faneuil Hall, and nightly the beauty and fashion of the place congregated to join in the merry dance. It was in the Concert Hall, a fortnight after the event of the last chapter, that a grand ball was given by one of the most distinguished officers of the army. The title of the town were there, and the light and the gay revel were proceeding with all the animation which the buoyant spirits of the guests could infuse.

A few days before, the garrison and citizens had been astonished by the advent of the great Rahab-ben-abel, the celebrated Persian necromancer, astrologer, and fortune-teller. It was announced by the town crier that he could detail to the people, with surprising accuracy, their past, present, and future history; that he could predict with unerring certainty the character, station and fortune of unseen and unheard of husbands and wives; that he could project horoscopes, and, in fine, tell anything the people desired to know. The officers of the army regarded him as a fit subject for mirth, and, accordingly, they made a good use of him in the promotion of their enjoyments. He had astonished many of them by the relation of the past incidents of their lives, but even this failed with them to establish his reputation as a conjurer. He was invited to all the balls and parties, and proved to be a decided addition to the entertainments.

At the ball on the present occasion, Rahab-ben-abel was one of the most prominent guests. He was dressed in full Persian costume, including the flowing robe and the lofty hat. He was apparently a very aged man; his long white beard swept his chest, and his form was slightly bent. He was a stern-looking man, his brow was wrinkled with a perpetual frown, and his voice harsh and grating.

Among the guests assembled were Colonel Powell, his daughter and Waldeck. Amelia was an unwilling reveler in the gay scene; devotion to her father alone made her consent to join in such festivities. She was still beautiful, still the belle of the town, but her heart was gloomy, and her spirit crushed. It was only by a strong effort of the will, that she appeared not wholly indifferent to the gaiety which surrounded her. Waldeck was as attentive as ever, hovering near her at every opportunity.

At each suspension of the dance, the astrologer was in great demand. With a mixture of dry humor and stern reserve in his manner, he related past histories, and predicted future destinies. He heeded not the merry peals of laughter which often followed his revelations; his whole attention was absorbed in the practice of his art. After supper, Colonel Powell, with his daughter leaning on his arm, and followed by Waldeck, reentered the hall which was comparatively empty. The renowned necromancer stood near the centre of the spacious floor, with his arms folded, gazing intently at the ceiling of the room.

"Let us consult the astrologer," suggested Colonel Powell, with a smile.

"By all means," added Waldeck. "No doubt he has our future destiny at his tongue's end."

Amelia tacitly consented, and the party approached the old Persian, who designed not to withdraw his eyes from the ceiling until addressed.

"Come, Mr. Astrologer, let us hear your sage predictions concerning our past and future," said Col. Powell.

The old man started, and with a profound shrill, harsh tones, he related to Colonel Powell the principal incidents of his life. Astonished and chagrined to hear his life thus minutely laid bare, he withdrew his hand and Waldeck presented him.

"Ha!" exclaimed the magician, as he examined the lines, and then cast a piercing glance into his face.

"Well, old conjurer, what do you see?" said Waldeck, as he observed the sudden start of Rahab.

Drawing the goldsmith close to him, and placing the left hand upon the crown of his head, while the right still retained the hand of Waldeck, he whispered in his ear.

"There is blood in the past!"

Waldeck sprang from him as though bitten by a viper.

"What is the matter?" asked Col. Powell.

"Nothing, nothing," answered Waldeck, endeavoring to appear unconcerned, while his face was ghastly pale, and his knees trembled.

"Go on with your story, then, old man; speak no more!"

"I will no more!"

"It will do very well to frighten children," said Waldeck, with a forced laugh.

"Children of large growth, I should think," said Colonel Powell, with a smile.

"Come, Amelia, give him your hand."

Amelia presented her hand, and the conjurer took it. It was a fair hand, and the old man

might have been excused for the gentle pressure he bestowed upon it. Turning his eyes from the palm he had for a moment regarded with intense scrutiny, he gazed into her face. Amelia was struck with his air and the apparent interest with which he viewed her. That gentle pressure of her hand seemed no part of the conjurer's trade, and her attention was riveted upon him.

"Fair maiden, I would not remind you of happier days," said he, in a lower tone than he was wont to speak, "but you ask the secrets of my art, and you must have them."

"Speak out, sir, I fear not to hear all," replied Amelia, with a smile of encouragement.

"You have been crossed in love," Amelia started, and her father would have drawn her away.

"Go on," said she, as her pale cheek lighted up with a crimson tint.

"Your former lover was cast off for a crime of which he is innocent."

"Speak louder old man," interrupted Colonel Powell, approaching nearer.

"The future," continued the old man, heedless of the interruption, "is bright. You will marry him who stands by your side."

"Bravo!" shouted Colonel Powell. "This is a most wonderful man. I say, Mr. Rahab-ben-abel, do you happen to know where any valuable gold mine is located? Give me the particulars, and you shall have half the profits."

But the conjurer heeded not the Colonel's jest.

"Perhaps your list of sciences does not embrace geology," continued Colonel Powell.

"Aye, the secrets of the earth are known to me," replied the old man in a solemn tone.

The music now summoned the dancers to the floor, and Waldeck was obliged to leave the party and meet his engagement with a lady.

The conjurer retired to a corner of the room, followed by Colonel Powell and his daughter, who declined in joining in the next dance.

"I have lost a ring, Rahab," said Amelia with a smile, and willing to prolong the adventure, "can you tell me where it is?"

"I can, lady. It was a valuable ring, as well as a curiously wrought one. It belonged to your mother, for whose sake, you esteem it more highly than all the riches of earth."

"I do, I do," exclaimed Amelia, forgetting in her interest the juggling trade of the man who addressed her.

"But where is it, old man?" asked Colonel Powell, forgetful as was his daughter, of the circumstances of the interview.

To the astonishment of the officer and his daughter, the astrologer related all the circumstances under which the ring had been lost.

"The murdered man removed the ring before his disappearance," said he, as he concluded his wonderful statement.

"Where is it, then?"

"I cannot tell without consulting the stars."

"Well, my man, here are the stars; look out this window and tell us all about it," said the Colonel, reminded by this mention of a trick of the craft, that astrology was a "defunct science."

"Without my astrology!" said the old man, looking into the officer's face with a glance so innocent as to half convince him that the astrologer was "no humbug" after all. "I will make a calculation to-night, and shall be able to answer your question to-morrow."

"Colonel Powell, a lady in the drawing-room desires to see you," said a waiter to the officer.

"Come, Amelia."

"I will remain here; I'm interested in this man's art."

"Very well, I will return in a moment," and Col. Powell departed.

"Amelia, do you not know me?" said the astrologer, bending over her and speaking in a whisper.

"Know you? Good Heaven! who are you?" exclaimed the lady, looking at him with surprise.

"Speak low and do not start. I am Robert Dewrie—as innocent of the crime charged to me, as the angels of heaven."

"Robert! can it be?" and Amelia, regardless of the caution, started back.

"Do not shrink from me. As God is my judge, I am innocent—it shall be proved, if you follow my directions."

"I will Robert, but I am so agitated I shall expose you."

"Be calm; advise your father to invite me to his house to-morrow morning. Here he comes."

"Yes, lady," continued he, as the Colonel approached, "the stars rule the destiny of mankind. Zoroaster, Confucius, Foo—"

Here he was interrupted by Colonel Powell's good-natured ridicule. Amelia did as he was bid at the mansion the next morning with the calculations concerning the ring.

A halo of hope was shed over the path of Amelia, and that night her prayer ascended that Robert might redeem his promise to establish his innocence!

CHAPTER VIII.

Rahab-ben-abel, according to his appointment, was at the mansion of Colonel Powell on the following morning, but the officer had not yet returned from his customary military duties. Amelia was alone.

"The stars are favorable," said the conjurer, as Amelia entered the apartment in

which he had been waiting. The frown that had before wrinkled his brow was not there, and a smile, the first he had been seen to indulge, played about his long white beard as he took her hand. Venus is in the ascendant.

"Oh, Robert, Robert, are you indeed innocent of this awful crime?" said Amelia, after an affectionate salutation.

"As innocent as you are, Amelia, whose gentle nature shrinks from the thoughts of crime," replied he; "can you not believe me?"

"Oh, yes, Robert, but how cruelly this event has lacerated my heart. Thank God, you are innocent; I shall, I must believe you."

"Bless you, Amelia; I could have borne all with fortitude but your detestation," said he, with a fervent pressure of her hand.

"You must acknowledge that the circumstances very strongly implicate you," added Amelia, with an air of hesitation.

"They do, very strongly; and I wonder not that even you should credit them."

"Oh, Robert, I heeded nothing till the thought of your bloody hand came to my remembrance. On the very night of the murder your memory your head was stained with blood. Against my reason almost, I refused to believe you guilty, till this appalling circumstance forced me to the terrible conclusion. But you cannot blame me!"

"No, Amelia; the evidence was enough to have convicted a saint, much more an erring creature like myself. That stain on my hand was given me by Mr. Waldeck, and the disguised young man related the particulars of his interview with that person on the night of the murder, describing how Waldeck in the darkness of the room had shaken hands with him, and thus imparted the ominous stains. The other particulars, including his mid-night visit to the goldsmith, were all detailed."

Amelia was satisfied. If her affections had not prejudiced her in his favor, she could not but have noticed the impress of truth which was graven on his manner, and fixed in his statement. She was again happy. The terrible load which had oppressed her heart was removed. The trials, the dangers, the doubt, that attended her future course, were all unheeded. She was convinced of her lover's innocence, and she was happy again, in permitting her affections to wander back into the old channel. They could love each other; and what if difficulties, separation, even death awaited them, they could still rejoice in their mutual fidelity.

"Throw off this disguise, Robert; my father, for my sake, will not again spurn you," said Amelia.

"Nay, dearest, I fear your father would not give the same credence to my statement that the ear of affection has given. I must yet prove my innocence; I must bring the real murderer to justice."

"And can it be done?"

"It can, but I must depend upon you for aid. Your ring was upon the finger of my murdered uncle. This ring must be the means of convicting him. You must beg him to examine the shop more minutely; assure him that your life is bound up in that ring."

"I fear I should not have the courage to confront a murderer."

"My life depends upon you. He is not a cunning man, and will produce the ring."

"Hush, here is my father," said Amelia, as she heard the door open.

The frown resumed its sway on the conjurer's brow, and he was again the same stern, immovable old man, he had been in the ball-room.

"The celestial science, lady, is as old as the world. The ancient kings of Persia, of Syria, of Egypt, all encouraged it, and the most renowned men of antiquity devoted all their talents to the divination of—"

"So, Mr. Rahab, what's your name, you are punctual to your appointment," said Colonel Powell, as the conjurer broke off his sentence and made a profound obeisance to him.

"The stars always meet at the appointed times; they are my mentors."

"You are a star yourself, perhaps. But what of the ring?"

"The night was cloudy, and the stars were hid from my vision," said the conjurer with stately emphasis, "when the veil is removed the secret shall be revealed."

"Bah!" exclaimed the Colonel. "But tell me, old man, where you picked up the incidents of my past life?"

Rahab-ben-abel pointed upward, but vouchsafed no other reply.

"No doubt of it," said the Colonel, with a light laugh.

Some further conversation took place, after which the astrologer took his leave, and, heedless of the shoutings of a group of little vagabonds, whose minds contained but little reverence for the occult sciences, he wended his way in Hanover-street, in which was located the sanctum of his incantations. Here he found a crowd of men and women, who had congregated to ascertain the ups and downs which the future had in store for them. But the astrologer, with dignified reserve, informed them that the stars were not favorable and dismissed them without displaying any of his wonderful wisdom. Seating himself in an easy chair, he relaxed the frown, and turned his attention to the consideration of his sublimity things.

His reflections were soon disturbed by a vigorous application at the huge knocker on the outer door of his sanctum.

"The stars are unfavorable; there is no knowledge to be obtained to-day," said the astrologer, with a kind of sneering smile on his face.

"Never mind the stars; I wish to see you," said a voice he recognized.

The astrologer opened the door and Waldeck entered.

"Well, Mr. Rahab, you have seen me before, perhaps you will remember," said the visitor.